an expert Group. The package envisages a fresh investment of about Rs. 1153 crore (Capital cost—Rs. 718.56 crore and non-plan support—Rs. 434.47 crore) on revamp of Talcher unit apart from other reliefs and concessions. The final decision on implementation of the reformulated revival package would depend upon the tie up of the funding arrangement and outcome of the proceedings pending before the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), which is a quasi judicial authority.

Assessment of Impact of Subsidy on *Fertilizers*

3667. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the impact of the subsidy on fertilizers has been assessed;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SHEES RAM OLA): (a) to (c) The subsidy on fertilizers has proved its worth by stimulating production and consumption of fertilizers contributing thereby to the development of agriculture in the country. During the period from 1980-81 to 1996-97, the consumption of fertilizers in terms of nutrients has gone up from 55.16 lakh tonnes in 1980-81 to 152.34 lakh tonnes (provisional) in 1996-97.

A High Powered Fertilizers Pricing Policy Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. C.H. Hanumantha Rao has been set up recently to review the existing system of subsidization and suggest an alternative broad-based, scientific and transparent system.

Hike in Prices of Consumer Items

3668. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cost of various consumer items has registered a steep rise following the rise in the administrative prices of petrol and petroleum products; and

(b) if so, the details of the quidelines issued in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) There was no steep increase in the prices of essential commodities following the hike in the petroleum products. The retail prices of 12 essential comodities at Delhi as on 2.7.1996, prior to the hike in petroleum prices, and as on 30.4.97 are given below:—

Commodity	Delhi (Rs. Per kg.)	
	As on 2.7.96	As on 30.4.97
Rice	11.00	12.00
Wheat	6.00	6.50
Gram	15.00	19.00
Tur dal	30.00	29.00
Sugar	15.50	15.00
Groundnut Oil	50.00	54.00
Mustard Oil	37.00	37.00
Vanaspati	42.00	39.50
Tea (loose)	76.00	85.00
Potato	7.00	4.00
Onion	6.00	6.00
Salt (packed)	5.00	6.00

(b) No guidelines were issued in this regard.